

**Washington, DC** - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced a \$929,006 federal grant he helped secure to allow eight new firefighters to be hired by the Binghamton Fire Department. The funds will help fill the void created when ten positions were cut last year as a result of local budget cuts. The department received help in obtaining the grant from Hinchey, who sponsored a series of workshops across his congressional district to help fire departments successfully navigate the grant application process. "These new firefighters will help ensure that squad and tower crews are more fully staffed," said Hinchey. "The brave individuals who put out the fires in Binghamton and in the surrounding area deserve all the support they need to continue protecting the community and rescuing those in harm's way. I'm pleased to announce that with these federal funds, the department will be able to hire eight new firefighters and continue providing excellent service to their community." "With this funding, two rigs will be fully staffed with four firefighters for every fire call – pursuant to National Fire Protection Association standards. The grant requires that the Binghamton Fire Department maintain current staff levels while the funding is used over a two year period. No local matching funds are required.

"The Binghamton Fire Department works very hard to provide the best fire and emergency medical services to the City of Binghamton," said Assistant Chief Richard Allen. "The awarding of the SAFER Grant allows us to continue this service while increasing safety for the firefighters and the public. We want to thank Congressman Hinchey for hosting the recent Assistance to Firefighters Grant seminar here in Binghamton. The seminar gave us great insight for improving our grant applications." The grant is provided through the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program and is administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey has continually worked to secure full funding for SAFER and the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program. Nearly \$20 million in grants have been awarded to fire and emergency departments in Hinchey's congressional district. Hinchey is also the author of the SERVE (Supporting Emergency Responders' Volunteer Efforts) Act, which would provide a \$1,000 federal tax credit to individuals who are active members of volunteer firefighting and EMS organizations. For the most current information regarding the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, please visit [www.firegrantsupport.com](http://www.firegrantsupport.com).